



OVERVIEW OF WIC

Federal and State Structure



National Picture

- National Office of USDA
- FNS (Food and Nutrition Service)
- WIC, Food Stamps, Commodity Program, School Lunch, Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Contracts with State Departments



Regional Picture

- Mountain Plains Regional FNS Office is in Denver
- 10 States and 10 Indian Tribal Organizations (ITO)
- Jean Liekhus Regional Program Director
- 10 Regional Program Specialist to support state programs
- Montana's specific program specialist is VeeAnn Miller



Program Components

- Financial Management
- Nutrition
- Administrative
- Vendor
- Information Technology



Regulatory Rules/Guidelines

- Federal Regulations
- Miscellaneous Rule
- Federal Guidance (Nutrition Services Guidance)
- Policy Letters
- Letters of Clarification
- Technical Assistance – formal and informal
- Management Evaluations
- Financial Audits



Funding Sources (formula)

- NSA (Nutrition Service Administrative)
- Food
- OA (Operational Adjustments)
- Infrastructure Funds
- MIS – SAM System
- Farmers Market (requires match)



Funding Formula (cont)

- Breastfeeding Peer Counselor
- State to State Technical Assistance
- Special Projects
- Montana State Support for IT
- Formula Rebate



History

Program was first piloted in the early 70's with the first sites at Fort Peck and Northern Cheyenne.

Through the 80's the goal was to grow and provide services in all counties and on all reservations in Montana.



MONTANA WIC (cont.)

- Program became automated in 1994
- Food \$\$ have been tight at different times
- Waiting lists, prioritizing of clients, and reduced cost food packages have been used



Funding

- Administrative \$\$ became tighter
- Funding from USDA has not increased
- Formula Rebates have decreased
- Costs at state and local levels have increased
- State increases due to IT costs; cost allocation; state staffing to provide oversight, monitoring and required professional functions



Regionalization of WIC

- How to make changes to conserve administrative costs
- Regionalization was discussed
- Visit to Nebraska
- Steering Committee met in November 2002
- Recommendations
- Responsibility Matrix (updated in 2007)



WIC Contracts

- 2002 - 42 Program Contracts including 7 Tribal Programs
- Today - 27 Program Contracts including 7 Tribal Programs
 - 17 with Counties or Local Public Health Programs
 - 3 with Private Non-profits or Hospitals
 - 7 with Tribal Organizations



Information Technology

- 1994 implemented in Local Clinics
- 2002 Montana was part of 4 state consortium to develop new system
- Montana pulled out of consortium, plans to build a new system
 - January 2003 Funding not available for new system
- 2003 WIC IT services moved to Information Systems Bureau in Technology Services Division
 - Concerns about WIC system failure



Information Technology

- Between 2003 and Now
 - System has been upgraded, communication system, infrastructure, data base, and clinic program
 - 2007 WIC received funding from the Legislature to support the IT system
 - 2007 Grant application for a SAM transfer system was successful with implementation in 2009



State Plan

- Annual Application
- Policies and Procedures Manual
- Explains how we will implement all the regulatory rules and changes
- Interpretation vs more stringent than federal regulation
- All changes we make to the program operations must be reflected in the State Plan
- State Plan must be reviewed, revised and sent to the Regional Office by July 15th of each year to take effect by October 1st



State Plan

- The State Plan can be changed, but must meet Federal Regulations and Guidance



Local Funding

- Funding for local programs based on a funding formula
- Changes and/or adjustments made every year
- Funding based on different parameters:
 - Participation
 - Size of Region
 - Inflation
 - Travel
 - Caseload maintenance
 - Special equipment or projects



Primary Goals of WIC Program

- Provide quality nutrition education
- Make appropriate referrals to other health and human service agencies
- Issue a food package to meet the nutritional needs of the participant



What Can Change

- As long as we meet the primary goals and federal regulations, let's look at any and all ideas on how quality WIC services can be provided to the greatest number of participants possible